

## Office of the Commissioner of Railroads

## Direct Testimony of Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT/Department)

Petition of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for the Establishment of a Public Crossing of the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, LLC Tracks with Wagon Trail Pathway in the City of Madison, Dane County

Docket 9170-RX-316

March 18, 2016

1 **Q. Please state your name, business address, and occupation.**

2 A. My name is Lisa A. Stern, P.E. I am the Grade Crossing Safety Engineer for the  
3 Wisconsin Department of Transportation located at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Madison,  
4 WI 53705

5 **Q. Please identify your education, professional qualifications, and work experience.**

6 A. I have a B.S. degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of  
7 Wisconsin – Platteville in 1999 and became a registered Professional Engineer in the  
8 State of Wisconsin in 2006. I have been employed with the Wisconsin Department of  
9 Transportation (Department) since 2006 where I am currently the Grade Crossing Safety  
10 Engineer. I work with highway and safety projects for the Department to determine what  
11 improvements are needed for at-grade crossings associated with the project and I am  
12 responsible for negotiating contracts with the railroad companies for the work.

13 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

14 A. The purpose of my testimony is to provide background on the projected use of the  
15 proposed public crossing and expected safety attributes of the crossing and proposed the  
16 level warning devices the Department recommends.

17 **Q. Are you sponsoring any Exhibits?**

1 A. No.

2 **Q. Please describe your exhibits.**

3 A. None

4 **Q. Would the establishment of the Wagon Trail Pathway crossing promote public**  
5 **safety and convenience?**

6 A. The establishment of a public grade crossing from the termini of Wagon Trail to the  
7 proposed Capital City Trail would provide a crossing of the WSOR track to from public  
8 right of way on the north to both the proposed city owned pathway and the World Dairy  
9 Wetland Mitigation Bank owned by the Department. This crossing would also provide  
10 access to easements held by the Madison Metropolitan Sanitary District, the City of  
11 Madison, and American Transmission Company. The location of the crossing currently  
12 has a crossing number and is labeled in the FRA database as a private crossing, currently  
13 there are no warning devices and no crossing surface, although during a field visit in  
14 August of 2015 a small amount of gravel had been placed through the tracks at the  
15 crossing location.

16 The Department's wetland bank allows site access for pedestrians and does not allow  
17 unauthorized vehicle access to the site. Although pedestrians are allowed on-site and a  
18 passive pathway exists on the site, it is not marked or mowed by the department at this  
19 time. The Department would also like to use this access for vegetation management  
20 equipment used for wetland restoration.

21 **Q. What does the Department propose for warning devices?**

22 A. The Department proposes that if established, this crossing should have passive warning  
23 devices installed. The sight distances with some clearing along the railroad right of way

1 would be adequate for a pedestrians and a bicycle or maintenance vehicle moving at 20  
2 mph. This type of vehicle would require a clearing sight distance of 110 feet along the  
3 track and a pedestrian would require 150 feet along the track, both assuming a train speed  
4 of 10 mph.

5 **Q. When would the crossing need to be installed by?**

6 A. The Department requests that if the public crossing is approved that the installation of the  
7 crossing surface be installed by the railroad by June 30, 2017.

8 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

9 A. Yes, it does.

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